

Message Text

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FOLLOWING REPEAT PARIS 21475 SENT SECSTATE INFO BEIRUT CAIRO
TEL AVIV DAMASCUS LONDON ROME BONN BAGHDAD DATED AUGUST 20.

QUOTE

UNCLAS PARIS 21475

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SUBJECT: LE MOND CORRESPONDENT'S INTERVIEW WITH ARAFAT

1. LE MONDE SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT ERIC ROULEAU HAD A LONG INTERVIEW WITH YASSER ARAFAT IN BEIRUT THE NIGHT OF 19-20 AUGUST. FOLLOWING IS OUR INFORMAL TRANSLATION OF ARAFAT'S REMARKS.

2. ARAFAT: "WE ARE NOT IN PRINCIPLE HOSTILE TO A NEW WITHDRAWAL, HOWEVER MODEST IT MAY BE, BY THE ZIONIST FORCES FROM THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES. HOWEVER, THIS WITHDRAWAL SHOULD NOT INCLUDE POLITICAL CONDITIONS OR THREATEN DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY THE INTERESTS OF THE PALESTINIAN REVOLUTION, THE ASPIRATIONS AND RIGHTS OF OUR PEOPLE AND OF THE ARAB NATION.

3. "NEVERTHELESS, IF THE INTERIM AGREEMENT DOES NOT TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THE RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED AT THE UNCLASSIFIED

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ARAB 'SUMMIT' IN RABAT, PARTICULARLY AS CONCERNSS THE OBLIGATION TO ACHIEVE ANALOGOUS WITHDRAWALS ON THE TWO OTHER FRONTS, SYRIAN AND JORDANIAN, I CAN ASSURE YOU HENCEFORTH THAT THE REGION WILL BE SHAKEN BY VIOLENT

SHOCKS EVERYWHERE AND AT ALL LEVELS. FUNDAMENTAL UPHEAVAL WILL NOT FAIL TO OCCUR, AMONG THE POPULATION AS WELL AS IN OFFICIAL CIRCLES. NO OFFICIAL, NO ARAB LEADER, WILL PERMIT HIMSELF TO VIOLATE RULES WHICH WERE ESTABLISHED IN RABAT, TO GO BEYOND THE NATURAL AND CONTRACTUAL SOLIDARITY WHICH TIES US ALL TOGETHER IN THE FACE OF A COMMON ENEMY. OTHERWISE OUR PEOPLE CAN TAKE THE MEASURES AT THE OPPORTUNE MOMENT WHICH ARE NECESSARY TO SWEEP AWAY THE OBSTACLES WHICH SOME ARE ATTEMPTING TO SET UP IN THE PATH OF THE PALESTINIAN REVOLUTION."

4. ROULEAU: "WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE CLAUSE IN THE DRAFT EGYPTIAN/ISRAELI AGREEMENT FORESEEING A PERIOD OF NONBELLIGERENCE OF THREE YEARS ON THE SINAI FRONT?"

5. ARAFAT: "THE ZIONISTS ARE LULLING THEMSELVES WITH ILLUSIONS. HOW CAN THEY BELIEVE FOR AN INSTANT THAT PRESIDENT SADAT, THAT THE EGYPTIAN ARMY IN PARTICULAR, WOULD BE WILLING TO STAND WITH FOLDED ARMS IN CASE A WAR SHOULD BREAK OUT BETWEEN THE JEWISH STATE AND SYRIA OR ANY OTHER ARAB COUNTRY.

"IN THE CASE ALSO IN WHICH THE PALESTINIANS CONTINUE TO SUFFER UNDER THE DAILY BLOWS WHICH THE ZIONIST LAND, SEA AND AIR FORCES RAIN ON THEM IN THE LEBANON. THE EGYPTIANS COULD NOT PREVENT THEMSELVES FROM FLYING TO HELP THEIR BROTHERS-IN-ARMS, THOSE WHO FOUGHT ON THEIR SIDE IN THE LAST CONFLICT. NO ARAB LEADER WOULD DARE TO REFRAIN FROM PARTICIPATING IN THE NEXT WAR. NOT EVEN KING HUSSEIN, WHO HASTENED IN OCTOBER 1973 TO SEND HIS TROOPS TO THE SYRIAN FRONT EVEN THOUGH IN THE BEGINNING HE HAD BANKED ON THE DEFEAT OF THE ARAB ARMIES."

6. ROULEAU: "HOWEVER, NOTHING SHOWS THAT ISRAEL HAS THE INTENTION OF ENGAGING IN HOSTILITIES AGAINST THE PALESTINIANS OR SYRIA DURING THE NEXT THREE YEARS."

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7. ARAFAT: "WE ARE IN POSSESSION OF ABUNDANT AND PRECISE INTELLIGENCE ON THE INTENTIONS OF THE RABIN GOVERNMENT TO LAUNCH A FIFTH ISRAELI ARAB WAR. THE PREPARATIONS ARE ALREADY VERY ADVANCED. THE EFFECTIVES OF THE REGULAR ISRAELI ARMY HAVE BEEN AUGMENTED BY 80 TO 200,000 RESERVISTS WITHOUT COUNTING THE 50,000 RESERVISTS WHO ARE SUBJECT TO AN INTENSIVE TRAINING. THE POTENTIAL OF THE LAND, SEA AND AIR ARMIES HAVE BEEN DOUBLED SINCE THE OCTOBER 1973 CONFLICT. THEIR FORCES HAVE BEEN SUPPLIED WITH SOPHISTICATED, ELECTRONIC MATERIAL WHICH HAS BEEN ADDED TO THE NUCLEAR ARSENAL WHICH THE CHIEF OF STATE, PRESIDENT KATZIR, HAS BOASTED OF. MR. RABIN HAS TAKEN AN ASSISTANT, AN EXPERT IN

ATOMIC ARMS.

"THE GOAL OF THE ZIONISTS--ACCORDING TO A REPORT OF THE DEFENSE COMMITTEE OF THE KNESSET IN OUR POSSESSION-- IS TO LAUNCH A WAR THEY WILL CALL DEFENSIVE, AFTER HAVING EXCLUDED EGYPT FROM THE CONFRONTATION FRONT. BUT EVEN EGYPT WILL NOT BE SPARED. THE ZIONISTS WISH TO DESTROY THE TOTALITY OF THE ARAB MILITARY POTENTIAL. ISRAEL IS FRIGHTENED BY THE ACCELERATED DEVELOPMENT OF THE ARAB POWERS IN THE MILITARY, ECONOMIC, FINANCIAL, TECHNOLOGICAL AND DEMOGRAPHIC AREAS. ACCORDING TO THE LOGIC OF THE MILITARY CLIQUE IN POWER, ISRAEL WILL HAVE NO OTHER CHOICE THAN A MILITARY VICTORY; THE ALTERNATIVE BEING COLLECTIVE SUICIDE IN THE TRADITION OF MASSADA. HOWEVER, IN MY ADDRESS TO THE UN LAST NOVEMBER, I INDICATED A THIRD PATH, THAT OF COEXISTENCE WITH THE PALESTINIANS."

8. ROULEAU: "DO YOU NOT THINK THAT THE US WILL DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO AVOID THE OUTBREAK OF A NEW WAR IN THE NEAR EAST?"

9. ARAFAT: "CERTAIN AMERICAN SERVICES ARE PERFECTLY AWARE OF THE ISRAELI INTENTIONS AND APPROVE OF THEM. THE US WISHES TO ASSURE THE PERPETUATION OF ITS INTERESTS IN THE REGION BY ANY MEANS. IT SEEKS TO PROTECT ITSELF AGAINST ARAB ECONOMIC REPRISALS IN CASE MR. KISSINGER'S MISSION DOES NOT PRODUCE THE RESULTS HOPED FOR. IT IS COUNTING ON ISRAEL TO DESTROY THE PALES-

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TINIAN REVOLUTION OR AT LEAST TO PARALYZE IT.

"AMERICAN IMPERIALISM HAS ALREADY MADE SIGNIFICANT GAINS IN THE REGION AMONG OTHER REASONS THANKS TO THE CAPITULATION ATTITUDE IN CERTAIN ARAB LEADERSHIP CIRCLES. THIS IS HOW THE US HAS REGISTERED POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC SUCCESSES ASSURING ITS INTERESTS IN THE FIELD OF PETROLEUM AND SECONDARILY IN THAT OF ITS INVESTMENTS."

10. ROULEAU: "HOW DO YOU EXPLAIN THE PASSIVITY OF THE USSR IN THE FACE OF THE AMERICAN DIPLOMATIC AND POLITICAL INITIATIVES?"

11. ARAFAT: "THE USSR IS DEPLOYING CONSIDERABLE EFFORTS ON OUR BEHALF, PUBLICLY AND IN THE WINGS. HERE IS THE LAST MESSAGE DATED AUGUST 8 WHICH I HAVE RECEIVED FROM THE SOVIET LEADERS AND IN WHICH THEY INFORM ME OF THEIR CONVERSATIONS WITH THE AMERICANS. AT THE HELSINKI CONFERENCE THEY ACHIEVED CONSIDERABLE RESULTS. I CITE AS PROOF THE COMMUNIQUE PUBLISHED AT THE END OF THE RECENT TRIP OF PRESIDENT FORD TO RUMANIA. FOR THE FIRST

TIME THE HEAD OF THE AMERICAN EXECUTIVE GAVE HIS GUARANTEE FOR THE 'RIGHTS' AND NO LONGER FOR THE 'INTERESTS' OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE.

"THAT HAVING BEEN SAID, I AM CONVINCED THAT THE US HAS NOT MODIFIED FUNDAMENTALLY ITS ATTITUDE TOWARD US. IT CLAIMS THAT ITS POLICY TOWARD THE NEAR EAST IS IN THE PROCESS OF REEXAMINATION. IT IS REALLY A QUESTION OF A RUSE DESIGNED TO LULL ARAB VIGILANCE BY A CLEVER MANEUVER WHICH PERMITS THE US TO AVOID THE QUESTIONS ASKED BY ITS ARAB FRIENDS, TRADITIONAL OR OF RECENT DATE, ALL THE WHILE CONTINUING TO PROVIDE ISRAEL WITH A MASSIVE AND MULTIFORM AID."

12. ACCORDING TO ROULEAU, ARAFAT, DISTINGUISHING THE "AMERICAN SOLUTION" DIRECTED, ACCORDING TO HIM, AGAINST THE VITAL INTERESTS OF THE ARAB PEOPLES, AND THE "POLITICAL SOLUTION" OF THE NEAR EAST CONFLICT, DECLARED THAT THE PALESTINIAN RESISTANCE IS DISPOSED

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"TO PARTICIPATE IN ANY MEETING, IN ANY INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE WHICH WOULD BE CHARGED WITH RESPONDING TO THE ASPIRATIONS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE, SUCH AS THEY HAD BEEN DEFINED BY RESOLUTION 3236 WHICH WAS ADOPTED LAST YEAR BY THE UNGA.

"SUCH IS THE ONLY CONDITION WHICH WE POSE."

"IN THE MEANTIME WE REMAIN VIGILANT AT A TIME WHEN THE NEAR EAST IS GOING THROUGH A VERY GRAVE PERIOD, A TIME WHEN THE ISRAELI-ARAB CONFLICT IS AT A TURNING POINT WHICH COULD BE EXTREMELY GRAVE."

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